

## NH Office of Energy and Planning: Responses to Questions

Re: Request for Information issued March 4, 2016

*The NH Office of Energy and Planning thanks all of the individuals and organizations that reviewed our Request for Information and took the time to submit clarifying questions by March 18. The following document includes all of the questions as you submitted them and our answers based on information available at this time. We look forward to receiving your responses to the RFI.*

### Acronyms used in this document

CAA: Community Action Agency

FAP: Fuel Assistance Program (synonymous with LIHEAP)

EAP: Electric Assistance Program

LIHEAP: Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (synonymous with FAP)

OEP: New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning

PUC: New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission

RFI: Request for Information

RFP: Request for Proposals

WAP: Weatherization Assistance Program

### A. Schedule/process

A1 In the event OEP decides to move forward with procurement, is there an estimated time frame available for when the RFP might be issued?

A1 Response: OEP hopes to issue an RFP by July 1, 2016; the actual date may be earlier or later. OEP will distribute any RFP that is issued to everyone on the RFI list and to everyone who submitted questions, and it will also be posted on the DOIT and OEP websites.

A2 Who is the project manager/technical contact with regard to this effort?

A2 Response: Project manager: Richard Minard, Deputy Director, NH OEP  
Technical contact: Robert Ditman, Fuel Assistance Program Associate,  
NH OEP

A3 If my firm does not submit a response to the RFI, if the State of New Hampshire eventually puts out an RFP for Energy Assistance Software, can we submit a response to the RFP?

A3 Response: Yes.

A4 What are the inbox size restrictions for submitting responses to the RFI?

A4 Response: Files must be no more than 25 MB

A5 If we choose to propose more than one of the six OEP proposed approaches, does OEP prefer that we submit separate responses to the RFI for each approach or that we submit the information for multiple approaches in a single RFI response?

A5 Response: A single response will be fine, particularly if your response helps to clarify the pros and cons of the various options.

A6 Will there be a list of responders posted after RFI?

A6 Response: No.

## **B. Funding/budget**

B1 Has funding been allocated and if so, from where (budget, grant, etc.)? If not, where does OEP anticipate looking for funding?

B1 Response: Funding has not been allocated. OEP expects to pay for the service/solution with funds available for the administration of the Weatherization and Fuel Assistance Programs, and potentially the Electric Assistance Program if it is included, and with approval of the Public Utilities Commission.

B2 Does OEP have an estimated cost, or desired not-to-exceed contract amount in mind for this and if so, how much?

B2 Response: No, but affordability will be a key consideration as we draft an RFP and select a final approach.

## **C. Existing Systems**

C1 Which vendor provided the utilities' billing system?

C1 Response: The system was developed by Ininet, Inc., of Keene, NH. WSB Technologies now maintains the hardware; River Delta maintains the software.

C2 What is TREAT and which vendor provided it?

C2 Response: TREAT is a software program for modeling building performance which is widely used by home energy auditors delivering the national Weatherization Assistance Program. TREAT stands for Targeted Retrofit Energy Analysis Tool. It was developed by

Performance Systems Development, 124 Brindley Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Phone contact: 607-277-6240. Website: <http://psdconsulting.com/programs/>

C3 What types of legacy systems might the new system be integrated with?

C3 Response: We have nothing to add to the information provided in the RFI at this time.

C4 Are existing legacy systems and CAA programs integrated?

C4 Response: There is some sharing of data and systems among the three programs (Weatherization, Fuel Assistance, and Electric Assistance) but they do not function as an integrated system. The primary legacy system is the system developed to administer FAP and EAP.

C5 Would the new system need to be integrated with the EmpowOR system that is currently being beta-tested?

C5 Response: That is one of the options we are considering.

C6 Do the CAAs' existing systems interface with any other agencies, vendors, providers, treasury, etc. beyond the electric utilities?

C6 Response: The Office of Energy and Planning does not have information about how the agencies interface with other programs.

C7 If a new comprehensive client management solution is implemented, are you looking to bring over existing legacy data from discontinued databases into the new system? If so, how is legacy data currently stored? Is it kept in an Access db, SQL db, DB2 db, other?

C7 Response: Yes, maintaining legacy data will be an important part of the solution. The FAP/EAP and EmpowOR systems are all SQL.

C8 Are there certain legacy systems that the NH OEP would prefer to continue to use in the future?

C8 Response: The answer will depend on what we learn from this RFI.

C9 In regards to EmpowOR, are there existing data capture or data accuracy checks?

C9 Response: The Office of Energy and Planning does not have access to EmpowOR and cannot answer that question at this time.

## D. Users and clients

D1 Are the Belknap-Merrimack CAA and NH Association of CAAs part of the 5 CAAs mentioned in the beginning of the RFI request documents?

D1 Response: There are five community action agencies in New Hampshire: Belknap-Merrimack, Strafford County, Southwestern Community Services, Southern New Hampshire Services, and Tri-County Community Action. The NH Association of CAAs is an umbrella that covers the five.

D2 In addition to the OEP, will there be users from the five Community Action Agencies (CAAs)?

D2 Response: Yes, OEP assumes that the five agencies will be the primary users of these systems. The Public Utilities Commission may also be a user.

D3 How many users (approximately) are anticipated to work on the system from OEP and each Agency?

D3 Response: We anticipate approximately 140-150 individuals statewide would use the system. Within each CAA, users would probably include client-intake staff, service providers (including weatherization teams), program managers and financial managers, and senior managers. At OEP and the Public Utilities Commission, users would probably include a small number of staff members responsible for managing the programs.

D4 Households will be the customer records in the new system. Besides, households, are there any other customers that should be considered for?

D4 Response: No. This RFI does not anticipate changing the types of data the CAAs collect or manage.

D5 Assuming the new system is on one platform to support the three programs, namely LIHEAP, WAP and EAP, can the managers (i.e. the users) from the institutions involved see all the data across, or will there need to be separation of data between the institutions?

D5 Response: Yes, the system will need to restrict access to data. OEP expects the platform to be able to allow a range of access permissions for users within each CAA and across the agencies, including OEP and the Public Utilities Commission. To protect client confidentiality, CAA employees will be able to see records for only those clients served by their own CAA.

D6 Page 3 of the RFI states, “We also request information about how these new systems might be integrated with legacy systems and Community Action Agency programs that share clients and data with LIHEAP, WAP, and EAP. We also request information about how systems could be deployed in each of a variety of ownership models and management structures.” Please

provide additional clarification regarding what is meant by ownership models and management structures?

D6 Response: The RFI outlines the possibilities in section 1.4, Alternatives Under Consideration.

D7 By design the current system provided OEP with read-only access due to the conflicts with the contractual agreements with the sub grantees being responsible for the data. Has this changed?

D7 Response: Not at this time, but this could change if necessary for implementing a new system.

D8 Is it OEP's intention to acquire the current solution, upgrade and enhancements and to own and manage the system? Is there an entity that OEP is considering to share the responsibility with?

D8 Response: The RFI outlines the possibilities in section 1.4, Alternatives Under Consideration.

D9 From a security, audit and fraud perspective is it allowable for a grantee to have the ability to change or alter data that is the responsibility of a sub-grantee?

D9 Response: OEP expects that any RFP emerging from this process will specify security requirements and how the system will be administered.

## **E. WAP specifics**

E1 Would the new system need to support similar functionalities in TREAT to calculate savings-to-investment ratios for weatherization measures?

E1 Response: The new system must have either an interface with TREAT to allow its continued use by the weatherization professionals or a US DOE-approved replacement.

E2 Please provide further details on the scope and level of integration for the WAP. Is it the intention to have both client and job data managed through this system?

E2 Response: OEP will look favorably upon systems that promote efficiency and clarity by managing client and job data across programs (for example, facilitating the targeting of high-electricity-demand households for weatherization services).

## **F. FAP/LIHEAP specifics**

F1 What's the new federal data requirements that the CAA's current systems need to meet?

F1 Response: See Attachment 1, below.

F2 Please describe the new federal requirements and expand on the reporting and analysis opportunities.

F2 Response: See Attachment 1, below.

F3 Please define enhanced program analytical requirements required by OEP.

F3 Response: See Attachment 1, below.

F4 Is there potential that sometime in the future the OEP may consider usage of enrollment into LIHEAP based on categorical eligibility for other HHS programs such as TANF or SNAP similar to what a number of other states currently do

([www.liheapch.acf.hhs.gov/tables/FY2015/autoeligtable.htm](http://www.liheapch.acf.hhs.gov/tables/FY2015/autoeligtable.htm))?

F4 Response: Categorical eligibility is not being considered at this time.

## **G. EAP specifics**

G1 Does the new system need to replace the existing software to determine EAP eligibility, and to calculate the correct discount level for each EAP applicant?

G1 Response: No.

## **H. Cross-Cutting issues**

H1 Do, or can, the 5 CAAs share the same set of data?

H1 Response: There is no Weatherization database that facilitates sharing WAP data. For FAP and EAP, Community Action Program Belknap-Merrimack Counties oversees a data system that does not allow CAAs to share data.

H2 In a scenario where a new master system is used, will data collection happen in this new system for all agencies, or will other systems or spreadsheets be used?

H2 Response: OEP anticipates that any new system used for Weatherization and Fuel Assistance will be used by all five community action agencies and that the system would eliminate functional redundancy. The agencies manage other programs (e.g., Headstart, Meals on Wheels) and OEP will seek CAA input on whether new systems could also support their work in these areas.

H3 What type of analytics and reporting are required, can OEP elaborate?

- a. Ad-hoc reporting or scheduled?
- b. What are the main challenges preventing the organizations from creating reports?

H3 Response: Program managers need to be able to manage financial data, client data, and housing data, and often to link the three. Most reports are scheduled and static but ad hoc inquiries are frequent and would be more useful if the systems were more suitable to this. There is no WAP database, only inconsistent spreadsheets maintained by each CAA, and OEP can access FAP data only one agency at a time, making statewide analyses difficult.

H4 Do you envision notices being automatically generated or mailed based on approval or denial?

H4 Response: Yes.

H5 Does the OEP have interest in using federal sources to electronically verify citizenship, immigration status, and social security number?

H5 Response: Yes. All client intake and verification functions will remain the responsibility of the subgrantees. OEP assumes that they would have an interest in these verification tools.

H6 Can OEP provide information as to the size of each of the current database systems in terms of number of records, number of columns and amount of data storage (e.g., MB or TB)?

H6 Response: OEP does not know the size of the database systems. For 15 years, FAP and EAP have enrolled approximately 35,000 households per year.

H7 Can OEP comment on the quality of the current data for each system in terms of cleanliness? If OEP chooses to integrate the databases, does OEP anticipate data cleansing will be required?

H7 Response: OEP has no insight into the cleanliness of the existing data systems.

H8 Does OEP have any preferences for the database platform (e.g., SQL Server or Oracle)?

H8 Response: No.

H9 Can OEP provide an overview of the technology environment for each of the database systems?

H9 Response: No.

H10 Can OEP elaborate on the current methods for compiling this information to perform business functions (i.e. reporting/ analytics)?

H10 Response: Sorry, we do not understand the question.

H11 Does a client have to apply for LIHEAP/WAP to be able to apply for EAP or would there be a separate Application Form for EAP?

H11 Response: OEP assumes that a single intake process should be able to determine eligibility for each of the three programs and to respond to the occasional changes in eligibility criteria.

H 12 Interfaces

- a. In addition to the utility companies, how many interfaces would the system include?
- b. Please provide any additional information about the needed interfaces.
- c. How many utility companies are there that would require an interface with the system?
- d. Does each utility company have a different interface or is there a standard format across the board?

H12 Response: OEP does not have the technical information to answer this question in full. There are four electric and gas utilities operating in New Hampshire.

H13 Would the Office of Energy and Planning share the major “pain points” they desire a possible system to address?

H13 Response: The RFI attempted to focus on the most important challenges.

H14 What browsers does the agency require the software to operate on?

H14 Response: OEP has not specified browser(s) in the RFI, though it may do so in the RFP. The current LIHEAP system experienced difficulties when Microsoft updated Explorer at the state level in 2015. Greater adaptability and flexibility would be valued.

H15 Item DF-2.6 reads, “Browser functionality must not rely on Java, Javascript or Java Applets to work.” Given that modern web Apps typically cannot run without Javascript, please clarify if this is correct.

H15 Response: When responding to the RFI, please notify OEP if your proposed solution/application utilizes Java, Javascript, and/or Java Applets and explain what each is used for. NH DoIT will review responses on a case-by-case basis.



H16 Are there standards that the system needs to follow i.e.: NH DOIT or DHHS?

H16 Response: Yes, NH DoIT has a comprehensive list of standard requirements any new system must incorporate. To request a copy, please email: [Robert.Ditman@nh.gov](mailto:Robert.Ditman@nh.gov).

## I. Security Systems

I1 RFI Section 3 invites RFI respondents to comment on the strength and weaknesses of the New Hampshire Department of Information Technology Guidelines that were provided upon request. However, the document titled “OEP Technical Requirements,” includes instructions for completion and columns C & D for inserting responses. Please confirm that for the purposes of the RFI, NH OEP is looking only to have comments on the document and not to have it completed.

I1 Response: Comments are welcome; completion is NOT expected.

I2 Please provide the link or contact to obtain a copy of the TIA-942 standard which is referenced in the hosting requirements.

I2 Response: When OEP issues an RFP it will include more thorough requirements for security.

## **Attachment 1: Minimum LIHEAP Performance Measures Requirements beginning in PY 16**

Data are required for all households and all fuel types including electricity, natural gas, oil, kerosene, propane, etc.

### **Energy Burden Targeting for all Households with 12 consecutive months of bill data (main fuel and electric)**

*The FAP system cannot currently identify households with 12 consecutive months of bill data.*

- Unduplicated number of households \*
- Average annual household income \*\*
- Average annual total LIHEAP benefit per household (heating, cooling, crisis, supplemental) \*
- Average annual main heating fuel bill
- Average annual electricity bill
- Average annual total residential energy bill
- Average annual burden before receiving LIHEAP
- Average annual burden after receiving LIHEAP
- Average percentage point change in energy burden
- Average percentage reduction in energy burden

### **High Energy Burden Households with 12 consecutive months of bill data (main fuel and electric)**

- Unduplicated number of high burden households (top 25%)
- Average annual household income for high burden households
- Average annual total LIHEAP benefit per high burden household (heating, cooling, crisis, sup. benefit)
- Average annual main heating fuel bill for high burden households
- Average annual electricity bill for high burden households
- Average annual total residential energy bill for high burden households
- Average annual burden before receiving LIHEAP for high burden households
- Average annual burden after receiving LIHEAP for high burden households
- Average percentage point change in energy burden for high burden households
- Average percentage reduction in energy burden for high burden households
- Benefit targeting index for high energy burden households
- Burden reduction targeting index for high burden households

### **Restoration of Home Energy Service**

All occurrences of LIHEAP households that had:

- Energy service restored after disconnection
- Fuel delivered to home that ran out of fuel
- Repair/replacement of inoperable home energy equipment

### **Prevention of Loss of Home Energy Service**

All occurrences of LIHEAP households that had:

- Past due notice or utility disconnect notice
- Imminent risk of running out of fuel
- Repair/replacement of operable equipment to prevent imminent home energy loss

### **Energy Burden Targeting (Optional)**

All households with 12 consecutive months of bill data (main fuel and electric)

- Average annual electricity usage
- Average annual main heating usage

High burden households with 12 consecutive months of bill data (main fuel and electric)

- Average annual electricity usage for high burden
- Main heating usage for high burden

Unduplicated number of LIHEAP bill payment-assisted households that use:

- Electricity as supplemental heating fuel
- Wood as supplemental heating fuel
- Other supplemental heating fuel
- Central air conditioning
- Window/wall air conditioning (including evaporative cooler)

\*Can currently be generated from the FAP system

\*\* May be available from the current FAP system